



Early Journal Content on JSTOR, Free to Anyone in the World

This article is one of nearly 500,000 scholarly works digitized and made freely available to everyone in the world by JSTOR.

Known as the Early Journal Content, this set of works include research articles, news, letters, and other writings published in more than 200 of the oldest leading academic journals. The works date from the mid-seventeenth to the early twentieth centuries.

We encourage people to read and share the Early Journal Content openly and to tell others that this resource exists. People may post this content online or redistribute in any way for non-commercial purposes.

Read more about Early Journal Content at <http://about.jstor.org/participate-jstor/individuals/early-journal-content>.

JSTOR is a digital library of academic journals, books, and primary source objects. JSTOR helps people discover, use, and build upon a wide range of content through a powerful research and teaching platform, and preserves this content for future generations. JSTOR is part of ITHAKA, a not-for-profit organization that also includes Ithaka S+R and Portico. For more information about JSTOR, please contact support@jstor.org.

A "SYMPOSIUM" ON EXPOSITORY PREACHING. I.

In view of the growing interest in Expository Preaching, the following questions were sent to some leading clergymen and teachers, with a view to helping students and preachers to a larger interest and a better understanding of this most important subject :—

1. What do you understand by Expository Preaching?
2. In what proportion to other methods of preaching ought it to be employed?
3. Do you think that special gifts are required to prosecute it successfully?
4. What kind of a preparation do you regard as necessary for it?
5. What parts of the Bible are most suitable for Expository treatment?
6. Are there any special reasons why it should have special prominence among methods of preaching at the *present day*?

Some of the replies received are given here. Others, equally important and helpful, will follow in succeeding numbers of the STUDENT.

From Prof. HERRICK JOHNSON, D. D.

1. Preaching upon a more or less extended paragraph of Scripture, where *exposition* is a chief element; but, as it is *preaching*, and not commentary, or paraphrase, the exposition must always be *with a view to persuasion*.

2. In much larger proportion than is now common in most American pulpits.

3. If by "special gifts" is meant special adaptations leading to early facility and success, *yes*. If by "special gifts" is meant peculiar powers beyond the reach of many, *no*. In other words, I hold that any student of fair exegetical ability and synthetical power may *prepare* good expository sermons, and if of respectable power of utterance, he can preach them.

4. Thorough painstaking *exegetical study*, wide knowledge of God's Word, discipline in analyzing an extended paragraph, seizing the salient controlling thought or "mother idea," grouping the details for the best development of that idea, and marshalling all for practical ends.

5. The doctrinal epistles, and Romans first and chief.

6. Yes.

(a) The present excess of human speculation and philosophizing. Expository preaching tends to repress it in the pulpit.

(b) The age wants something *authoritative*. There is tremendous positiveness, and there is great weight of authority in a "Thus saith the Lord." Expository preaching puts God to the front.

(c) The *many sidedness* of our modern life, which the many sidedness of Scripture alone can meet—and expository preaching tends to bring this many sidedness out.

Chicago, Ill.

From Rev. A. J. ROWLAND, D. D.

1. Expository preaching, as I understand it, is that form of discourse by which the truths or lessons are drawn from a paragraph or chapter, rather than from a single verse or text. Robert Hall's lectures on Philippians, Andrew Fuller's lectures on Genesis, and Robertson's sermons on the Epistles to the Corinthians are excellent examples of the expository method. So are the volumes of "The Expositor's Bible" now being issued.

2. It would be well, I think, if a considerable proportion of our preaching were expository. I doubt, however, whether among the masses of church-goers it would be a popular method. The preacher would probably be accused of giving his people prayer-meeting talks rather than a regular sermon. My own experience leads me to the conclusion that courses of expository preaching must be disguised under the title of lectures to make them acceptable. There is a fashion in preaching as in everything else, and he that fails to follow the fashion must expect to reap the usual consequences. The more mature, and those better qualified to judge, will doubtless be pleased and profited, but the mass of hearers will want the regulation "text and sermon."

3. In my judgment, also, it takes the special gifts of analysis and condensation to prosecute successfully the expository method. The tendency with many men would be to a sort of rambling diffusiveness which would make the discourse long and uninteresting. The expository preacher must be one who sees the great truths taught in a paragraph, and is able to detach these from the minor truths with which they stand in relation. He must leap, so to speak, from height to height, and not linger in the valleys between. I do not think every man has the faculty of doing this.

4. The best preparation for expository preaching is to be found in an analytic study of the Word of God, and by reading the lectures or sermons of those who have made a pronounced success in the use of the expository method. The question which the expository preacher needs to ask is, "What are the leading thoughts and truths of the paragraph or chapter to be expounded?" Such books as David Thomas' Homiletic Commentaries on Matthew and The Acts will be useful to him, though, after all, he must depend on his own analytic skill and the illumination of the Spirit of God.

5. The parts of the Bible most suitable for the beginner in expository preaching are the historical books. First and Second Samuel in the Old Testament, and The Acts of the Apostles in the New, are the most suggestive. The Expositor's Bible, however, is proof that the entire Scriptures are susceptible of this treatment. Dr. Boardman of Philadelphia has gone through all the Books of the Old and New Testament in this way, and, while he is pre-eminently qualified for such work, his example at least proves the possibility of others doing the same. Probably the shorter doctrinal epistles may be found most difficult, though I am sure, from some personal experience, that they will yield very rich results.

6. The evident need of a more general and systematic knowledge of the Bible is one special reason, at least, for expository preaching at the present day. It is impossible under the old method of single texts to give, from the pulpit, any such instruction. With the expository method the people could readily be taught the central thoughts and doctrines of the various separate books of the Bible and their relation one to another. For this reason, if for no other, I should

be glad to see the expository method more generally adopted, though, as I have already said, I doubt whether among the masses of church-goers it would find at first any very pronounced welcome.

Baltimore, Md.

From Rev. J. H. TWICHELL, D. D.

1. Expository preaching, to my view, is bringing out in discourse the moral lessons of Holy Scripture as they lie somewhat obvious to common apprehension pretty near the surface of the text where they may be immediately come at, employing imagination and skill in practical application, rather than, or more than, critical linguistic scholarship or learning in history, geography, ethnology, etc. To turn the text to moral use with as little delay as possible should be the aim and rule.

2. It may profitably be the method of *half* the preaching—particularly if one preaches twice a Sunday. But many sermons that are not distinctly expository will be in part such—*most* sermons in fact.

3. A very successful expository preacher in Connecticut was the late E. C. Jones (long a member of the Yale Corporation) of Southington—my native town. An article on the subject by him may be found in the *New Englander*, Vol. 25, No. 94, January 1866, written by him toward the end of his life. As a topical preacher he was inclined to be heavy. As an expository preacher (without manuscript) he was interesting to all classes of hearers, including the young. He was a man of no *special* gift for the exercise, I should say, except that of painstaking. I have been told of his saying that he knew Palestine better than he did Connecticut. If I may instance myself, I once went through the Book of the Acts in that way, and not without acceptance from my congregation (it was when I had a second service, and I used a map), yet I certainly have no special gift at that sort of work.

4. Bending the imagination on the text—not the uninformed imagination of course—the English text presumably—till the scenes, situations, persons come to vivid life; or, in case of didactic text, getting yourself into the writer's point of view, and into sympathy with his feeling at the time; also into a lively apprehension of the kind of people he is addressing, and the occasion of his addressing them.

5. *Eminently* the historical, dramatic portions in which human nature is illustrated; but there is no part of the Bible which will not readily lend itself to expository treatment.

6. Yes, several reasons. Dogmatic theology has abused the Bible, and obscured its real character by taking it out of its office. Expository preaching—which should not be dominated by theological prepossession and be all the while whipping around to take off its hat to the creed—tends to restore the Bible to its place. It tends also to diminish the need of any *theoretical* handling of the subject of *inspiration*. Personal acquaintance with the Bible creates the *feeling* that it is a divine book; causes it to be *seen* that it is so. Again, the church is weary of the *systems*, and largely in doubt about them all, and is not edified and nourished, as it once was, perhaps, by presentations of evangelical truth shaped to them—has less religious appetite than it had that way. Expository preaching is the most available method for feeding the spirits of the faithful with the Word in these evil (?) times; and as well for avoiding collision with the temper of skepticism and questioning that is abroad.

Hartford, Conn.